

## WINCHESTER HOUSE

## EAST GREEN STREET

Much rumor and speculation surround the "Old Winchester Mansion" in Westminster. Reports vary widely and wildly, but it seems reasonably certain that it was built by the heirs of William Winchester, founder of Westminster, around 1800 on a ten acre hill top estate a few hundred yards south of the west end of his original town. The original house, which may have been a 2½ story five-bay wide gable-roofed Georgian building, has long since been swallowed by later additions. There are several reasons to assume that such might have been the original house; the Winchesters were a sophisticated family and privy to the Georgian-Federal style that would have then been popular in older regions of this country; further, examination of the east facade reveals curious window placement, placement which would likely have appeared on a Georgian-Federal mansion suitable to the family of the town founder.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CARR # 542  
MAGI #0505425304

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Winchester House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

East Green Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

7

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Carroll

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

\_\_\_DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

\_\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_\_SITE

\_\_\_OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

\_\_\_PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

\_\_\_BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

\_\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED

\_\_\_UNOCCUPIED

\_\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

☒ YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_\_NO

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_\_EDUCATIONAL

\_\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_\_MILITARY

\_\_\_MUSEUM

\_\_\_PARK

☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

John W. Humbert

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

3502 Littlestown Pike

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21157

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Carroll County Office Building

STREET & NUMBER

Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

Liber #: 170

Folio #: 496

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

\_\_\_FEDERAL \_\_\_STATE \_\_\_COUNTY \_\_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The former Winchester House, which has been owned by some of the towns most important citizens, has had a rather checkered existence. The building sits on a rise overlooking the City and looking north to East Green Street between that street's intersection with Sycamore and Ralph Streets in Westminster.

Although at least part of the fabric is one of the oldest houses in the City, having been built by William Winchester's heirs around 1800\*, he died in 1790, the house underwent thorough and extensive alterations during 19th century when it was used as a residence for several of the City's more prominent men, and, later as a summer hotel. The place, in fact, still has the atmosphere of this later use, as it has now been adapted into a multi-unit apartment building.

There seems to be several distinct sections to the building. The largest section is a three story five-bay-wide double-pile hipped-roof section. This may be the original house, or at least it may contain parts of the original house. This section is the easternmost section of the rambling pile. Its principal facade looks to the north and has an entrance door as the ground story central bay. The entrance door has some elaborate "Federal" enframement about it still (such as pilasters and fan light). The other ground story bays are double hung sash windows paned two-over-two except for the westernmost (former) window which is now a plain unpanelled door. Above, each of the other two stories has five regularly placed double hung sash windows. The easternmost three on the second story are paned 6/6; the rest are 2/2. A later addition to this section is an equalateral triangle shaped dormer placed out of the roof and flush with the main facade. The dormer is covered with cusped shingles and has a tripartite semi-Palladian window at its center.

The east facade has four windows in it which may be original; two each on ground and second stories. Those on the ground story are 2/2, those on the second story are 6/6. Looking at the east facade, its possible to envision the original house as being 2½ stories tall. This assumption might be made by observing the existing and filled in wall windows between the second and third story. If the building were two stories with a gable roofed attic, a very common form in the area, these small windows are perfectly placed to light the attic. There are innumerable examples of this style, from about this period, in the area, and it would make sense that a five bay wide 2½ story gable roofed unit would have been built by the Winchester family. Just 7 years after the theoretical date of construction, of this house, for example, the "Shellman House" was built; this very up-to-date buildings consist of a front section which would be nearly identical with this house, if these guesses about its original dimensions would be correct. In any event, assuming that the third story and hipped roof attic were later, there is

\*Local legend is fond of attributing the pile to William Winchester; this is not so as it was built several years after his death.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# **8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES	with several c. 1800 alterations	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Winchester Family, John C. Frizzell; and others
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			

Much rumor and speculation surround the "Old Winchester Mansion" in Westminster. Reports vary widely and wildly, but it seems reasonably certain that it was built by the heirs of William Winchester, founder of Westminster, around 1800 on a ten acre hill top estate a few hundred yards south of the west end of his original town. The original house, which may have been a 2½ story five-bay wide gable-roofed Georgian building, has long since been swallowed by later additions. There are several reasons to assume that such might have been the original house; the Winchesters were a sophisticated family and privy to the Georgian-Federal style that would have then been popular in older regions of this country; further, examination of the east facade reveals curious window placement, placement which would likely have appeared on a Georgian-Federal mansion suitable to the family of the town founder. In any event, in 1846, David Fisher, an early settler in the area and the prominent banker, bought the old house with ten acres of land from the Winchester heirs. Scharf's History of Western Maryland discusses the house, but is not by any means diffinitive;

"The old Winchester Mansion was on the land now owned by Judge John E. Smith, and the fine residence and seat of Colonel A. McKillip (sic) is a part of the original Winchester Tract. The house was built about 1800, and is still one of the finest in the County. In 1846 David Fisher bought it, with ten acres, of the Winchester heirs, and soon after became the property of Jacob Fisher, and subsequently of John C. Frizzell. Colonel Mckillip (sic) purchased it in 1800."

This account does not square with the County's land records, however, on December 20, 1849 John Fisher bought, at a public sale, 24 acres on the edge of Westminster, which may be this tract, (Carroll County Deed Book 11, Page 86). Item four of his Last Will and Testament, dated February 15, 1858, gives an bequeaths "to my brother, Jacob Fisher, 200 shares in the back of Westminster, and a life estate in the tract of land adjoining the town of Westminster, formerly belonging to David Winchester. At his death it is my will and I hereby declare it to be the property of my nephew, John C. Frizzell." In any event Frizzell was the owner by mid-century having, inherited it, with about ten acres from the Fishers. After he inherited the land, Frizzell laid out much of the

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Being a parcel of land containing 9 7/8 acres situated in Westminster between East Green Street, Center Alley, Addlespurger Alley, and John Alley, as shown on a plat of "John C. Frizell's Addition to Westminster" recorded among the land records of Carroll County in Plat Book 1, Page 119.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Christopher Weeks, Consultant

December

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Westminster Historical Sites Survey

STREET &amp; NUMBER

TELEPHONE

c/o City Hall Public Works Department

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Westminster

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

a central 6/6 window in the present third story. Two large corbel capped chimneys rise just inside the brick wall on this facade. It is unlikely that these would have existed on a house built in 1800, and would instead probably be remnants of later owners' alterations. The south facade is much altered; the west facade is now covered over in additions and extensions.

The first of these extensions is a two-story-plus-mansard-roof unit. We may infer from the ground and second stories' bay placement this section contains twin units. There is a central axis with, on the ground floor, an entrance door and window widely separated at the extreme ends and a single 2/2 window on the second story, again far off the central axis. It's only in the mansard roof with its three round arched and hooded 2/2 windows that any even placement of windows or doors exist. West of this section is a three-story pyramid-roofed tower. The tower has an entrance door and a 2/2 window on the ground floor, a pair of 1/1 windows on the second floor, and a trio of 1/1 windows on the third floor. This window treatment (going from one on the first floor to two on the second floor to three on the third floor) is an example of local mid-Victorian wit. There is a shed-roofed frame extension to the west of the tower; the north or south facades of all the units have been altered, covered in aluminum siding, and randomly punctuated by doors and double hung sash windows. There is some attempt to unify the principal facades; this effort takes the form of a one story flat roofed heavy porch which runs across the entire principal front. The brick of all these units now painted a curious acqua color which contrasts luridly with the yellow cream trim, and heightens the flashy nature of the building.

tract into what is now East Green Street.

Old plats of this of his subdivisions prominently indicate springs and streams. Frizell, doubtless hoping to capitalize on them, probably hoped to make this area into a spa. Scharf comments:

John C. Frizell, of Westminster, had several springs on his estate which he supposed contained medicinal properties, as a number of his friends had derived considerable benefit from the use of the water, and at their suggestion he had it analyzed. The water had also been highly recommended by physicians as anti-dyspeptic. During the first part of July 1870, he placed some of the water in the hands of Prof. William E. Aiken, of the University of Maryland, Baltimore, who sent him the following analysis:

"University of Maryland,  
"July 7, 1870.

"John C. Frizell":

"My dear Sir, I have just completed the qualitative analysis of the sample of mineral water you sent me, and herewith send results: a gallon of water contains 15.76 grains of saline matter. This quantity, taken in connection with the character of salts present, will fully entitle the water to the name of a mineral water. The contents of the water are:

"Hydrochloric acid  
Sulphuric acid  
Carbonic acid  
Silicic acid, of the last a trace  
Lime  
Magnesia  
Soda  
Iron  
Alumina, a trace  
Organic vegetable matter.

"The above substances, arranged in their order of the well-known combinations, may be considered as representing the following compounds, which give the mineral character and medicinal value of the water:

"Bicarbonate of lime  
Bicarbonate of magnesia  
Bicarbonate of iron  
Sulphate of lime  
Sulphate of soda  
Sulphate of magnesia  
Chloride of sodium  
Alumina  
Silicic acid  
Organic vegetable matter.

"Respectfully, etc.  
"William E. Aiken.

"P.S. The copious deposit that falls when the matter stands for a time consists almost wholly of oxide of iron."

Besides inheriting the house, Frizzell took the place of the Fishers in the Union National Bank. In 1863 John Fisher died, having been cashier or director of the Bank from its inception nearly 50 years, earlier. Frizzell succeeded him cashier, and two years later the bank was robbed.

"About two o'clock on Thursday evening the cry of fire was raised in the town. John Frizzel, the cashier, and the clerk were both in the bank at the time. Mr. Frizzel locked the outer door of the building, leaving the vault open, and proceeded to the scene of the conflagration, which proved to be the barn of Mr. Frizzel, which had been set on fire, and which the citizens succeeded in extinguishing. On returning to the bank it was discovered that the front door had been forced, and the institution robbed of eleven thousand dollars in greenbacks and ten thousand dollars in the issues of the bank consisting of twenty and fifty-dollar notes. A large package of ten-dollar notes was dropped on the floor of the vault in the hurry of the thieves to get away. The whole affair was executed in a few minutes, and was remarkably well planned."

In 1866 the institution was changed from the State Bank of Westminster to that of the Union National Bank of Westminster, when John J. Baumgartner was elected cashier in place of Mr. Frizzel, who had resigned.

In 1880 Frizzel took out a deed of trust on his estate (53/283), which was foreclosed on February 27, 1887 when William A. Maulsby and others sold the place for \$5300 to William A. Mckellip (60/243). Three years later Mckellip sold to the Land Improvement Company, (71/247) which was liquidated by George W. Albaugh and others. Albaugh and the others sold the place to the Lumber, Coal Company and Supply Company of Carroll County on March 13, 1929 (152/129), which sold to present owner on May 18, 1939.



tends over a period of more than thirty-five years. In these years he has filled numerous public offices with an efficiency that redounds not only to his credit, but to that of his town, county, and state. With unusual ability he has solved problems of civil government to the great advantage of his fellow citizens until he enjoys the merited esteem accorded him on every hand.

Benjamin F. Crouse is a native of Westminster and a son of the late Ira E. Crouse, who for many years was one of Westminster's most representative citizens. After receiving the public school course of education, Mr. Crouse attended Western Maryland College and was graduated in the class of 1873. He then read law with the late Judge Smith and the late William A. McKellip, and began his practice. When Dr. Shaw was elected clerk of the circuit court in 1873, he appointed Mr. Crouse to the chief

For twenty years Mr. Crouse has been the leader of his party in Carroll county and is widely recognized as a strong leader of men. He has set a high standard in politics and Carroll county's excellent condition, of which we are all proud, is justly attributable to Mr. Crouse and his constituents.

In the advancement of Westminster's interests no man has been more liberal and active. He has taken part in the promotion of many of the co-operative enterprises that have done most for Westminster. He is a director in the Union National Bank, the Democratic Advocate and many other semi-public institutions.

Mr. Crouse is an able lawyer, a strong counselor, and a man of literary taste and attainments. He possesses the attributes of courtesy, gentility, and honor and justly merits the eminent place he has won in the esteem of his fellow men.

and set by him deserves the admiration of men. To him belongs the credit for the law enjoyed by our people today which eradicated one of the grossest evils of our modern jurisprudence—the fee system in criminal prosecutions. Men in the highest walks of life, unacquainted with penal law, cannot realize “man’s inhumanity to man” where the State paid to unscrupulous officers of the law a premium for unqualified conviction. Instead of putting a man’s life or liberty into jeopardy, when he was convicted that the defendant was innocent, Mr. Steele never hesitated to make a motion for a prisoner’s discharge. In these acts are reflected the true attributes of gentility—that of never doing a mean thing or suffering it to be done by another.

Mr. Steele is a son of Mr. J. Henry Steele, and a grandson of the late Joseph Steele, one of the first Commissioners of this county. His mother was the daughter of Dr. Koswell Wakenman of Cecil county, whose family belongs to the early history of our county. Mr. Steele was born and reared on a farm, where he developed

Hill Park, of Baltimore, and whose family names are associated with our country’s early history.

During his four years as State Attorney, Mr. Steele prosecuted many cases and secured conviction before juries in all but six instances. Of the numerous cases carried to the Court of Appeals, no case has been reversed.

After the expiration of his term as State’s Attorney, Mr. Steele was appointed city solicitor and when the present mayor was elected Mr. Steele was reappointed and is continuing his able services to Westminster’s great advantage. He was instrumental in securing the new charter which has given new life to municipal improvement and enterprise. He is also a member of the Merchants and Manufacturers’ Association and the Editor in Chief of the Democratic Advocate. He takes enthusiastic interest in every movement whose standard is a symbol of good will towards men and is doing his full share to restore the Bar of Carroll county to the eminent position it once held for learning and gentility.

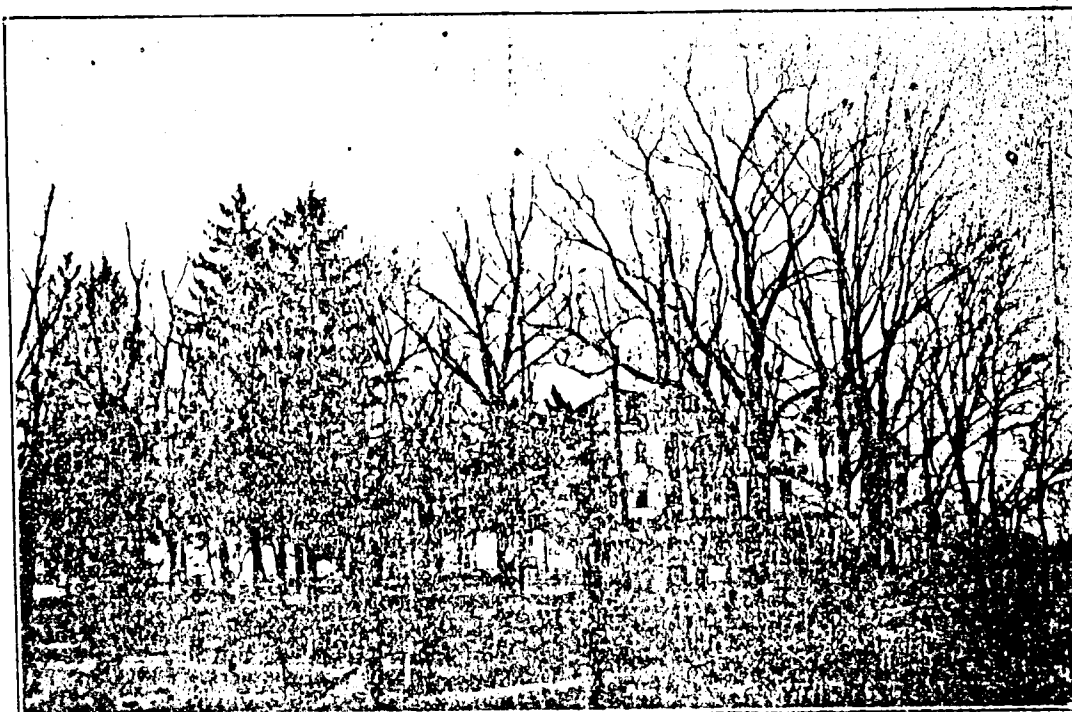
## WINCHESTER PLACE, An Ideal Summer Resort.

Among the historic spots in Westminster, Winchester Place stands pre-eminent. The nucleus of the principal building was built in the latter part of the 18th century. It was a roomy brick structure and for many years the finest residence in this part of the state. In 1889 it was remodeled and enlarged to meet the demands of a summer home. The following year the Misses Wroth established their summer resort which has grown in popularity with each passing season. The Misses Wroth are of Maryland birth and possess the many charms that make their entertainment a model of Southern hospitality.

In recent years three cottages and a play room for children have improved the eight and a half acres of park-like surroundings. The playhouse is easily convertible into a ball for dancing and other amusements. This home is supplied with every convenience enjoyed in the larger cities. A fine orchard furnishes much fruit for the guests and croquet grounds and tennis courts are always at their service.

Winchester Place deserves much credit for the prestige Westminster has won as a city for summer guests.

Winchester Place  
The Old



57%



CARR 542

Winkler House

(I-11)

570/0



CARR-542



CARR-542